

AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE VARIATIONS ON THE THEME OF  
PAGANINI'S TWENTY-FOURTH CAPRICE, OP. 1 BY BUSONI,  
FRIEDMAN, AND MUCZYNSKI, A LECTURE RECITAL,  
TOGETHER WITH THREE RECITALS OF SELECTED  
WORKS BY BACH, BEETHOVEN, CHOPIN,  
DEBUSSY, HINDEMITH, KODÁLY,  
PROKOFIEV, SRIABIN,  
AND SILOTI

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The purpose of this study is to analyze sets of variations on Paganini's theme by three twentieth-century composers: Ferruccio Busoni, Ignaz Friedman, and Robert Muczynski, in order to examine, identify, and trace different variation techniques and their applications. Chapter 1 presents the purpose and scope of this study. Chapter 2 provides background information on the musical form "theme and variations" and the theme of Paganini's *Twenty-fourth Caprice*, Op. 1. Chapter 2 also deals with the question of which elements have made this theme so popular. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 examine each of the three sets of variations in detail using the following format: theme, structure of each variation, harmony and key, rhythm and meter, tempo and dynamics, motivic development, grouping of variations, and technical problems. Chapter 6 summarizes the findings from this study and attempts to compare those elements among the three variations. Special attention is given to the application of the motivic cells, which are drawn from the original Paganini theme, in the development of succeeding variations. This study shows how these motivic cells contribute to the construction of new motives and melodies in each variation. Additionally, this study attempts to examine each composer's efforts in expanding variation procedure to the areas of structures and tempo markings in succeeding variations.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Variation is arguably the oldest and most enduring musical form in music history. Composers have used certain themes repeatedly as thematic sources for variations. The theme from Paganini's *Twenty-fourth Caprice* in A minor, Op.1 is one of them. From its inception, Paganini's theme has inspired many composers to write variations. These include: Johannes Brahms, Franz Liszt, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Ferruccio Busoni, Ignaz Friedman, Karol Szymanowski, Alfredo Casella, Witold Lutoslawski, George Rochberg, Wiktor Labunski, Andrew Lloyd Webber, and, recently, Robert Muczynski. Among these, the works of Brahms, Liszt, Busoni, Friedman, Labunski, and Muczynski are for piano solo.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to analyze sets of variations on this theme of Paganini by three twentieth-century composers: Ferruccio Busoni, Ignaz Friedman, and Robert Muczynski, in order to examine, identify, and trace different variation techniques and their applications. Busoni (1866-1924) is regarded as one of the greatest musical minds in the early twentieth century. He is particularly well known for his variations and transcriptions of works by Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Paganini, Schoenberg, and many others. He twice transcribed Liszt's *Paganini Etude No. 6* which in itself is a variation. The first transcription of *Paganini Etude No. 6* (1913) was published

separately by Breitkopf and Härtel, and is relatively close to Liszt's original work. The second transcription was published in 1920 as the tenth piece of "*Lo Staccato*" which is the third part of Busoni's *Klavierübung*. It has eight variations and an extended coda. This study will examine this second version.

Ignaz Friedman (1882- 1948) was a Polish composer-pianist and a pupil of Theodor Leschetizky, and can be ranked with Leopold Godowsky, Sergei Rachmaninoff, and Josef Hofmann as being among the greatest pianists of the first half of the twentieth century. Friedman's recordings of Chopin, particularly the mazurkas, are regarded as incomparable.<sup>1</sup> Although many of his piano works are characterized as "salon" pieces, some of his transcriptions and paraphrases show both craftsmanship and extraordinary inventive power. His Paganini variations, composed in 1914, are as technically challenging as the more well-known Brahms Op.35 set of variations and are worthy of comparison in musical quality as well in many respects. Each of the seventeen variations in the Friedman set displays both virtuosic difficulties and musical originality.

Robert Muczynski (born 1929), an American composer, has written pieces in a wide variety of genres. He has been a featured guest composer at several universities and national music conventions since the 1970s. Muczynski's awards include two "Young Composer's Project" Fellowship Grants from the Ford Foundation (1959, 1961), a Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award from De Paul University, the International Society for Contemporary Music Prize (1961), "Best of the Year 1966" by *Piano Quarterly*, and a Pulitzer Prize nomination (1982). He is considered to be one of the

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<sup>1</sup> Harold C. Schonberg, *The Great Pianist* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987), 311.

leading American composers of the day. Muczynski's *Paganini variations* were written in 1994 and dedicated to his sister Gloria. Although Muczynski's music is basically tonal, he employed many contemporary compositional devices and innovations in each of the twelve variations.

The three works mentioned above are not well known to the public due to their relatively infrequent performance. However, they are very effective pianistically because of the highly idiomatic writing for the instrument. All three works unquestionably deserve a place in the concert repertory because of their artistic value and technical originality.

#### Scope of the Study

This study provides an analysis for each composition in an effort to give the performer greater interpretive understanding and a better informed performance realization. The study is divided into an introduction, four major chapters, and a conclusion. Chapter 1 presents the purpose and the scope of this study. Chapter 2 provides background information on the musical form "theme and variations" and the theme of Paganini's *Twenty-fourth Caprice*, Op. 1. Chapter 2 also deals with the question of which elements have made this theme so popular. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 examine each of the three sets of variations in detail, focusing on specific features of the theme, structure, harmony, rhythm, innovative compositional devices, grouping for performance, motivic development, and technical problems, with brief discussions of the lives and general musical styles of the composers. Special attention will be given to the application of the motivic cells, which are drawn from the original Paganini theme, in the

development of succeeding variations. This study will try to point out how these motivic cells contribute to the construction of new motives or melodies of each variation.

Chapter 6 summarizes the findings from this study and attempt to compare those elements among the three composers.

Because the works by Busoni and Friedman were written during the same decade, they are analyzed in the same manner using the following format: theme, structure of each variation, harmony and key, rhythm and meter, tempo and dynamics, motivic development, grouping of variations, and technical problems. Although Muczynski is a later generation, since his work is basically tonal, the same format will be applied in the analysis. However, the work dates from the last decade of the twentieth century, it is necessary to add different techniques to the analysis, such as the pointing out contemporary compositional idioms and their applications in each variation. Additionally, this study attempts to examine the composers' efforts of expanding variation technique to the areas of structure and tempo mark in the succeeding variations.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE THEME OF PAGANINI'S *TWENTY-FOURTH CAPRICE*

#### IN A MINOR, OP.1

In the musical form theme and variations, the listener is typically “informed” only once when the theme is presented, and then “reminded” subtly or overtly ever after through the succeeding variations. The variation form has a long history and popularity and it was associated exclusively with dances and well-known melodies for its first few hundred years. Sometimes formed as movements in suites, or later, sonatas, most variations were free-standing or “independent” works, usually conceived for keyboard.<sup>2</sup>

As bravura music, variations generally allow the player's virtuosity to be displayed. Through their diversity of thematic transformations, they may be revealed as complicated structures and demand great efforts of appreciation on the part of the listener.<sup>3</sup> The chief characteristic of the variation form lies in the principle of repetition. A theme is stated, then repeated a number of times, each time in a new guise. Two main types of variation may be distinguished:

- 1) The ornamental variation, which aims at brilliance and virtuosity.
- 2) The characteristic variation, based on the art of thematic transformation.

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<sup>2</sup> Elaine Sisman, *Haydn and the Classical Variations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), ix.

<sup>3</sup> Hugo Leichtentritt, *Musical Form* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951), 95.

The ornamental variation retains the harmonic basis of the theme yet changes the melodic line into figurations, passage work, and arabesques. The characteristic variation transforms the theme into something entirely new, each time giving it a totally different character. Although it may stray from the theme, it never loses contact with it. Many works in variation form combine the two styles.<sup>4</sup>

The theme of a variation is normally relatively simple in form and direct in expression, and it constitutes a strong foundation for a series of the variation to follow. It is frequently in a period, binary, or incipient ternary structure. But the only general observation that can be made is that it is rarely less than eight measures and usually not more than thirty-two measures in length.<sup>5</sup> As a small part form, the theme is normally a complete entity in itself. It comes to a full close and can stand alone as a small, independent composition.<sup>6</sup> The theme may be composed especially for variations, or it may be borrowed from a traditional or popular source or from the music of another composer.

Sometimes, a borrowed theme from a fine composer may well serve as a useful guidance for the development of variations. As Sutton stated in his article “A Theme of Paganini”:

A borrowed theme, skillfully fashioned by a composer of genius, serves as a useful guideline, and the intellectual challenge of grappling with the formidable problems of musical development is neatly side-stepped. Success in the process

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Wallace Berry, *Form in Tonal Music* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1986), 299.

<sup>6</sup> Jere Hutcheson, *Musical Form and Analysis: A Programmed Course* (New York: Crescendo Publishing, 1977), 2:118.

of variation writing is governed by the inventiveness of the composer and the adaptability of the theme. The theme must have qualities that render it appropriate to the variation form's particular needs.<sup>7</sup>

The theme from Paganini's *Twenty-fourth Caprice* Op.1 for solo violin is undoubtedly an ideal type of a borrowed theme, and is notable for the number of variations it has inspired. Apart from Paganini himself, it has served as the basis for many works (see table 1).

Table 1. Works based on Paganini's theme.

Composer	Title of the Work
J. Brahms	<i>Variations on the Theme by Paganini, Op. 35</i>
F. Liszt	<i>Grande Etude de Paganini, No. 6</i>
S. Rachmaninoff	<i>Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini, Op.43 for Piano and Orchestra</i>
F. Busoni	<i>Variation- Studien nach Paganini- Liszt (Klavierübung edition)</i>
I. Friedman	<i>Studien über ein Thema von Paganini, Op. 47b</i>
Tommasini	<i>Il carnevale de Venezia, Variations in the Manner of Paganini for Orchestra</i>
Szymanowski	<i>Three Paganini Caprices, for Violin and Piano, Op. 40</i>
Boris Blacher	<i>Variation on a Theme by Paganini for Orchestra</i>
Lutoslawski	<i>Variations on a Theme of Paganini, for Two Pianos</i>
Thalben-Ball	<i>Variation for Organ Pedals</i>
Friedrich Diehn	<i>Paganini Variations and Finale for Orchestra</i>
Robert Rochberg	<i>Fifty Caprice-Variations after Paganini</i>

<sup>7</sup> Wadham Sutton, "A Theme of Paganini," *Musical Opinion* 94 (March 1971): 287.



Table 1. Continued.

Andrew Lloyd Webber	<i>Variations for Cello and Rock Band</i>
Leon Kartun	<i>Caprice rythmique pour le piano</i>
Wiktor Labunski	<i>Four Variations on a Theme by Paganini</i>
Jascha Zayde	<i>Theme and Variations for Two Pianos</i>
Marvin Maazal	<i>Variations on a Theme by Paganini for Pianoforte and Orchestra</i>
R. Muczynski	<i>Desperate Measures (Paganini Variations)</i>

Nicolo Paganini's set of *Twenty-four Caprices*, Op.1, for solo violin was composed between the years 1801 and 1807, with the dedication "*Agli Artisti*"(to the artists). This work of Paganini was clearly influenced by the famous violinist Pietro Antonio Locatelli (1695-1764) and his work *L'arte di nuova modulazione (Caprices enigmatiques)*. Locatelli's *L'arte* was actually a reedition of his earlier *L'arte del violino*, Op.3, with an incorporation of twenty-four caprices. These undoubtedly served as a model for Paganini's own. Locatelli's new model of modulation procedures opened a new world of musical possibilities for Paganini. As deSaussine wrote in *Paganini*:

He pondered on this new kind of modulation, which was suggestive and emotional. The tones were as varied as the expressions on human countenance, and on this pivot turned the whole of new technique. It was not a mere tour de force, but an intrinsically musical achievement, vital and stimulating.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Renee deSaussine, *Paganini* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1970), 24.

Under Locatelli's influence, Paganini published the *Twenty-Four Caprices*, his first major work. As a tribute Paganini quoted Locatelli's seventh caprice in his own first piece. The *Twenty-Four Caprices* were the only important works that were published in his lifetime, because he withheld publication of most of his compositions to keep secret his personal working methods. When the *Caprices* were first published, it was widely believed that, until Paganini himself performed them, they were unplayable. They were written utilizing the specific violinistic effects and techniques that Paganini discovered or developed. Invariably they were exceedingly difficult to perform, yet were eventually considered by most Romantic composers to be his finest achievement.<sup>9</sup> This set was published in Milan in 1818, with the autograph now being in the possession of the Ricordi firm in Milan. The set is considered as a compendium of technical devices that Paganini had conceived and worked out during his early years in Lucca. As deCourcy states in *Paganini, the Genoese*, Paganini wrote to Lichtenthal in 1796 that he had "composed difficult music of his own invention."<sup>10</sup>

His contemporaries, such as Schumann, Liszt, and even Brahms already began to discover themes and ideas in this set that were worthy of development in piano music. The theme of the *Twenty-fourth Caprice* has prompted much attention from its inception because of its strong, clear, conclusive harmonic basis and its distinctive repetition of sixteenth-note figures in the melodic line. This theme has only twelve measures in 2/4

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<sup>9</sup> G.I.C. deCourcy, *Paganini, the Genoese* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1957), 73.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

time and in a binary form. It contains an element of variation in itself, the second half being a variant of the motive found in the first half (example 1).

Example 1. Paganini, *Twenty-fourth Caprice*, Op.1, theme with implied harmony.



In his article, “A Theme of Paganini,” Wadham Sutton states:

The strong attraction of this theme lies in large measure in its essential flexibility, for it is not a theme at all, but rather is as much a skeletal framework which is suggestive of a harmonic scheme. Its structure is of an artless simplicity: a few bars of tonic and dominant harmony, a sequence through the subdominant to the relative major and a direct return to the tonic by way of a strategically placed augment 6<sup>th</sup> chord. The melodies which can be made to fit so conventional a progression are legion, and Paganini’s initial impulse is sufficiently neutral to accommodate an infinite number of perfectly legitimate modifications. So pliable is this theme, so flexible its structure, that practically any treatment can be made to be relevant. Indeed it is an abiding danger to the charlatan, who will merely use it as a prop for his faltering imagination. Yet to the true artist, striving always to impart cogency and to develop it in a meaningful way, it presents a considerable challenge.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Wadham Sutton, “A Theme of Paganini,” 287-88.

Example 2. A harmonized theme of Paganini by Friedman.



It would be noteworthy to understand the elements that have motivated composers to write their own variations based on a particular theme. Other than the above-mentioned characteristics, binary form structure, diatonic melody, and slow harmonic progression have all played an important role as well in attracting composers to produce works based on this theme. A binary form is usually well-suited to variation treatment, because in the repeated section or the second half a change or an alteration can easily be made. A diatonic melody certainly allows a composer more room for incorporating ornamental gesture, either chromatically or diatonically than a chromatic melody. Slow harmonic rhythm makes it possible for a composer to be free within the basic scheme of the harmony. For example, a simple progression of I to V allows any variety of chords to be inserted between them.

As mentioned before, at least twenty sets of variations were based on Paganini's *Twenty-fourth Caprice*.<sup>12</sup> It is likely that Paganini had no premonition that his theme would receive such attention and extended treatments not only in the subsequent years but into the next century.

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<sup>12</sup> More works by many minor composers could be listed.

## CHAPTER 3

### BUSONI: *VARIATIONS-STUDIEN NACH PAGANINI-LISZT*

#### (KLAVIERÜBUNG VERSION)

#### Introduction

Ferruccio Busoni(1866-1924), “the first of the great modern pianists,”<sup>13</sup> was one of the most versatile and broadly cultured musicians of his generation. In addition to being a celebrated pianist, he was also a composer and arranger, a conductor, a writer, a theorist, and a highly respected teacher of piano and composition. In a letter to Busoni in November 1919, Bernard Shaw wrote:

But you should compose under an assumed name. It is incredible that one man could do more than one thing well; and when I heard you play, I said, “It is impossible that he should compose; there is not room enough in a single life for more than one supreme excellence.” You seem to be a virtuoso of the first order in handling instruments; in fact, your danger is an excessive sensitiveness to shades of tone and delicacies of harmonies.<sup>14</sup>

As if these accomplishments were not enough, Busoni also mastered several foreign languages and avidly cultivated an apparently insatiable interest in world literature, philosophy, and the visual arts. In brief, he was a genuine *uomo universale*, a

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<sup>13</sup> Harold Schonberg, *The Great Pianists*, 355.

<sup>14</sup> Ferruccio Busoni, *Letters to His Wife*, trans. Rosamond Ley (London: Edward Arnold, 1938), 289.

Renaissance man. Yet, among all his widely varied interests and achievements, he is alleged to have regarded musical composition as “his truest form of self-expression.”<sup>15</sup>

Busoni’s style at the keyboard was reputed to be monumental and, in the minds of some, eccentric. According to Harold Schonberg:

Critics, and even many of his fellow pianists, could not always follow his ideas. Although his approach remained basically Romantic, he discarded many of the excesses and mannerisms of the Romantic style, and set the stage for the more “modern” school of Hofmann, Rachmaninoff, Petri, Schnabel, and others. He was entirely without the cloying *Kitsch* of so many of the Romantic Chopinists.<sup>16</sup>

In 1902 Busoni repounded to a critic who complained about his “modern style.”

You start from false premises in thinking it is my intention to “modernize” the works. On the contrary, by clearing them of the dust of tradition, I try to restore them their youth, to present them as they sounded to people at the moment when they first sprang from the head and pen of the composer.<sup>17</sup>

According to Otto Luening in his book *The Odyssey of an American Composer*:

Busoni’s piano playing must begin with the statement that technically he could play anything at any speed. His control of dynamics was complete and ranged from a whispering and haunting pianissimo to a fortissimo that rivaled the power of an orchestra. His pedaling was unique and set him apart from any other pianists I have ever heard. He sometimes used two or three pedals at the same time, setting sonority patterns that were somewhat veiled but within which he played with great, bell-like clarity. At times, he would raise or lower a pedal with great rapidity, even on a single note or chord, creating myriad tone colors and strange vibrations. His touch and attacks were always related to the pedals he was

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<sup>15</sup> Edward J. Dent, *Ferruccio Busoni: A Biography* (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), 19.

<sup>16</sup> Harold Schonberg, *The Great Pianists*, 346-47.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

using so that he could transform the piano sounds at will from a vaguely singing and orchestral instruments.<sup>18</sup>

Busoni's piano playing was often unconventional, yet it was always gigantic. He was the pianist of Beethoven's *Sonata Op. 106*, Liszt's *B Minor Sonata* and *Don Juan Fantasy*, and Bach's *Goldberg Variations*. Undoubtedly, he was one of the most fascinating, brilliant, large-scaled, and controlled pianists of all time.<sup>19</sup>

During the first quarter of the twentieth century Busoni played an important role in promoting the development of new music. This he did, not only by means of his provocative and futuristic writings<sup>20</sup> on music, but also by means of his own daring compositional experiments. His experimentation focused on all parameters, although it focused mainly on those relating to pitch. His late-period works abound in such usages as expanded tonality (including the then-novel "progressive tonality") and such other non-traditional practices as polytonality, mode exchanges (major-minor fluctuations), polymodality, virtual atonality, the use of synthetic scales, the whole-tone scale, and the use of higher tertian sonorities and polychords.<sup>21</sup> Busoni criticized composers who chose to develop and thereby work within a personalized system or concept, which was of limited dimensions, drawing from the resources of music only sound material that was

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<sup>18</sup> Otto Luening, *The Odyssey of an American Composer* (New York: Scribner's, 1980), 168.

<sup>19</sup> Harold Schonberg, *The Great Pianists*, 354.

<sup>20</sup> These include *The Essence of Music* and *Sketch for a New Aesthetic of Music*.

<sup>21</sup> George A. Winfred, "Ferruccio Busoni's Compositional Art" Ph. D. diss. (Indiana University, 1982), 186.



stylistically consistent with their preconceived aesthetic. Busoni's goal lay in a different direction:

The creator should take over no traditional law in blind belief. He should seek out and formulate a fitting individual law, which after the first complete realization, he should annul, that he himself may not be drawn into repetitions when his next work shall be in the making. The function of the creative artist consists in making laws, not in following laws ready made. He, who follows such laws, ceases to be a creator.<sup>22</sup>

Many of his innovations have now become staple features of composition. This indicates that Busoni saw well in advance of many of his contemporaries the essence of a new music.

Busoni's interest in the transcription process led him to transcribe works by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Goldmark, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Paganini, Schoenberg, and many others. His admiration for Liszt and his consummate powers of transcription guided Busoni to make a transcription of Liszt's *Paganini Etudes*, which were already transcriptions in themselves. Larry Sitsky writes: "Busoni's intimate study of various versions of the Liszt *études* provided the impetus for his own edition of the *Paganini Etudes*, often combining Lisztian ideas from several different editions."<sup>23</sup>

Prior to this set of études, Busoni had transcribed another work--*Introduzione, Capriccio (Paganineseo) and Epilogo* (1909), the last book of the four-book collection

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<sup>22</sup> Daniel M. Raessler, "Ferruccio Busoni as Experimental Keyboard Composer," *Piano Quarterly*, 108 (winter 1979-1980): 44.

<sup>23</sup> Larry Sitsky, *Busoni and the Piano: The Works, the Writings, and the Recordings* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1986), 213.

*An die Jugend*. This work was a result of Busoni's admiration for Liszt's technique of combining various sections of caprices to form a composition.

The second version of Busoni's Paganini variations (1920), which is the main topic of this chapter, is contained as the tenth piece in "Lo Staccato," which is the third part of his *Klavierübung*. Busoni's *Klavierübung* is a comprehensive collection of technical exercises and concert works that have not been published separately or appeared before, excerpts of music edited or arranged by Busoni, excerpts of his own music, and arrangements of other composers' works. There are two editions; the first, consisting of five parts, was published in 1920; and the second, consisting of ten books in one volume, was published posthumously in 1925. This collection is a rich resource of concert repertory, as well as a key to the study of Busoni's music and technical innovations for the piano.

In a foreword to the third part "Lo Staccato," Busoni includes an introduction explaining the principles and purposes of the whole *Klavierübung*:

This *Klavierübung* is based on an all-embracing plan, but the plan is not presented in conformity with rigid pedagogic principles; it is, at any rate, not without gaps; furthermore, insofar as it is within the author's power, this *Klavierübung* achieves a comparative completeness only by the inclusion of his own works on Bach and Liszt. The author's area of interest lays in avoiding discouraging the student with theoretical fantasies that could not be executed. . . . I have also given attention to devising exercises that are stimulating, and, in part at least, entertaining: the aim of this was to make the pupil realize that the study of an art is something to be enjoyed.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 169.

*Variations-Studien nach Paganini-Liszt(Klavierübung Version)*

Busoni's first transcription of Liszt's *Sixth Paganini Etude* was transcribed in August 1913 and published separately in Leipzig by Breitkopf and Härtel in 1914. The second transcription, which is contained in the *Klavierübung*, is slightly different from the previous one. Of the entire set of Liszt's theme and variations, only the theme and variations 1, 3, 6, 8, and the last few measures of the coda are transcribed in the first version. The remaining variations (variations 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, and 10) are left untouched by Busoni. However, in the second version of the *Klavierübung*, there is an *ossia* for variation 5, an added variation 6A, a variation 9 that is very similar to Liszt's original, and an extensively rewritten variation 11, which is really a new composition.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, only variations 2, 7, and 10 of Liszt's composition are left untouched. When comparing the two transcriptions, it is noticeable that Busoni considered himself more of an editor in the first version in which he made fewer changes and adhered more closely to Liszt's original. Busoni, however, indicated in the score, "Variante des Herausgebers"-- "variations by the editor"-- in the *Klavierübung* version, taking the liberty of introducing new ideas that he felt were implied in the originals. Only this second version is examined in the present study.

This work has a theme, eight variations and an extended coda which is fifty measures long. Busoni called this work a study after Liszt's *étude*, perhaps implying its pedagogical value.

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 220.

### Theme

Busoni, unlike Liszt, did not change anything contained in Paganini's original theme; Busoni simply retained the melody, harmony, and the overall structure. The first note of each measure is assigned to left hand instead of right hand.

The structure of the theme is 11:4:11 8 11, exactly like that of Paganini's. Busoni did not change this basic structure in the following variations except for the finale, in which two measures of introduction are joined to the triple length coda (48 measures). Simple arpeggiated chords spanning the intervals of tenth and fifteenth are the accompaniment patterns.

Example 3. Busoni, *Paganini Variations*, theme.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for the theme of Busoni's *Paganini Variations*. Each system consists of a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Below the staves, harmonic analysis is provided for each measure. The first system has five measures with analysis: *am: i*, *i*, *V*, *V*, and *iv* (under a brace). The second system has six measures with analysis: *V* (under a brace), *I*, *vii°7*, *i6*, *Aug. 6th V*, and *i* (under a brace). A large Roman numeral *III* is centered below the first two measures of the second system.

The harmonic progression is almost identical to Paganini's implied harmony, except in the thirteenth measure, where the ii° of Paganini's is changed into vii°7. The form of the theme is a simple binary, the total number of measures of each section being identical (8 measures).

The key of A minor, tempo mark (*vivace moderato*), and the meter 2/4 are kept unchanged throughout the whole set of variations. Writing the variations in the same key throughout is an unlikely practice for the time. Busoni, however, is simply following the Paganini-Liszt models. One exception in key relationship is made at the beginning of the coda, where the first section is started in A major and is changed to A minor at the end of that section.

### *Structure*

Other than the theme's original structure II:4:II 8 II, there is also found a II 8 I 8 II structure in the following variations, which usually shows textural differences in the written out repetition section of the first half. Variations 2, 4, and 5 take the original structure, while variations 1, 3, 6, 7, and 8 assume the other. The structure of the coda seems to have a two-measure introduction and three more variations. In effect, the whole set appears to have twelve variations of equal length. The only salient difference between the previous eight variations and the three variations of the coda lies in the harmony of the final cadence. The final cadences of the first two variations of the coda are open (V,V7).

## Harmony

Busoni generally followed Liszt's harmonic treatments in most of the variations except for the newly written coda. In variation 1, the harmonic progression is exactly the same as in the theme, except for one place in the last cadence where the original augmented sixth is replaced by  $ii\emptyset$ . Variation 2 utilizes an unusual harmonic device to begin a section. Instead of starting on the tonic, Busoni placed a  $vii^{\circ}7$  of the dominant key (E minor), then proceeds later to a tonic, and then repeats it (example 4). These  $vii^{\circ}7$  chords are not used in a functional way but used as non-essential chords like appoggiatura chords, since they share two common notes (C and A) with next chords. Example 4. Busoni, *Variation 2*, measures 1-4.

The image shows a musical score for Variation 2, measures 1-4. The score is written for piano, with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The music features a complex harmonic progression. Below the score, there is a handwritten harmonic analysis. The analysis shows the following chords and their constituent notes:

- Measure 1:  $vii^{\circ}7 / em$  (chord of F# minor, notes: F#, C, A, E)
- Measure 2:  $i$  (tonic of E minor, notes: E, G, B)
- Measure 3:  $\nabla 6$  (augmented sixth chord, notes: F#, C, A, E)
- Measure 4:  $vii^{\circ}7 / em$  (chord of F# minor, notes: F#, C, A, E)

Below the analysis, there is a diagram showing the relationship between the notes of the chords. It consists of a horizontal line with a '6' above it and a '5' below it, with a '4' below the line. The notes F# and C are written above the line, and A and E are written below the line. The diagram is enclosed in parentheses, with a '5' above the line and a '5' below the line. The notes F# and C are written above the line, and A and E are written below the line.

Busoni also replaced the final augmented sixth with  $ii\emptyset$ . In variation 3, however, the augmented sixth is resumed.

In variation 4, every measure has two different kinds of non-harmonic tones: a changing tone and a passing tone (example 5).

Example 5. Busoni, *Variation 4*, measures 1-4.



In the last phrase of this variation, the normal harmonic progression  $\text{vii}^\circ 7 - \text{i} - \text{Aug. 6}^{\text{th}} - \text{V} - \text{i}$  is changed into  $\text{N}6 - (\text{V}7) - \text{i} - \text{ii}^\circ - \text{V} - \text{I}$  (example 6).

Example 6. Busoni, *Variation 4*, measures 12-16.



In variations 5 and 6, Busoni applied  $\text{vii}^\circ 7$  chords in places of  $\text{V}7$  chords in the first phrase of the second half. The original harmonic progression  $(\text{V}7 - \text{i}) / \text{iv} - (\text{V}7 - \text{I}) / \text{III}$  is replaced by  $(\text{vii}^\circ 7 - \text{i}) / \text{iv} - (\text{vii}^\circ 7 - \text{I}) / \text{III}$  to show a chromatic line in the bass (example 7).

Example 7. Busoni, *Variation 5*, measures 9-13.



The augmented sixth of the final cadence is replaced by  $ii\emptyset$  in variations 5 and 8, while it is retained in variations 6 and 7.

In the coda is encountered what has been called as “sound concept”<sup>26</sup> rather than harmony. Here, Busoni suddenly departs from traditional procedures and begins an exploration of new ideas and sounds. This coda is the only section that is relatively unrelated to Liszt’s or Paganini’s set of variations. Raessler comments in his article:

Busoni advocated a harmonic means of expression which was based upon a broadening and not a restriction of the sound concept. The breadth he sought was not to be achieved through turning away from any one tradition, but rather by the freedom to include in a composition any harmonic sounds he desired.<sup>27</sup>

The coda, in relation to the previous variations, would certainly fit the description of “freely used harmonic language which might otherwise appear arbitrary,

<sup>26</sup>Daniel M. Raessler, “Ferruccio Busoni as Experimental Keyboard Composer” *Piano Quarterly* 108 (winter 1979-80): 42-43.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, 43.



confused, or inconsistent.”<sup>28</sup> Non-functional harmonic progression, change of modes, extensive use of seventh chords, sudden shifts of semitone relationship keys (IV- bIV), and modulation from a tritone key (ebm) are among the devices found in this coda as representing Busoni’s free harmonic language. The coda-finale consists of three more variations as its intrasections. The first section begins in A major, then in the second half moves back to a minor. The modulatory harmonic progression is as follows:

A: (V7- I)/IV - (V7- I)/III -V7 -I - (am:) i- V7.

The key of A major comes back to A minor by way of D major (IV) and Db major (III). Since Db is an enharmonic key of C# which is a third degree pitch of A major, it becomes a key area of III in the above example.

The change of modes is not a common compositional device for Busoni in this set of variations. In the second section of the coda, however, Busoni used that device by replacing V chords that follow the initial i chords with I chords for the first two phrases consistently.

At the final cadence of this section, the augmented sixth is replaced by i chord with a voice-leading of 3 – b3, resulting in the harmonic progression ii<sup>o</sup>- i- vii<sup>o</sup>(example 8). The parallel downward motion is used to express the chromatic melodic gesture in this linear cadence.

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

Example 8. Busoni, *Coda*, measures 31-34.



Although the last section of the coda has the same number of measures as the previous sections, it is divided into asymmetrical phrases (3+ 3+ 3+ 3+ 4). The first measures of the four three-measure phrases are constructed by two different kinds of seventh chords. The first is constructed as minor triad + major seventh ( $i^7$ ), and the second as diminished triad + minor seventh ( $ii^\circ$ ). These two chords of each measure can be respelled as harmonic minor scales of various keys for the sake of finding new key areas (example 9).

Example 9. Busoni, *Coda*, measures 35, 38, 42, and 44.



Example 9. Continued.


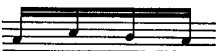

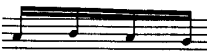
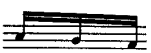



The key of this last section starts in A minor, goes to G minor, and F minor, and finally reaches Eb minor, which becomes a distinctive penultimate key (#IV-a tritone relationship key). This final section shows a series of harmonic progression [i- iiø-(vii°7-i)/4<sup>th</sup> higher key- vii°7- i] in sequence (see example 19). However this only reflects the harmonic movement of tonic- subdominant- tonic in a series of descending keys by a whole step. The final chord is not an A minor but an A major chord, this becoming a Picardy cadence of A minor tonality.

### *Motivic Developments*

From the motives of the theme, a number of motivic cells can be distinguished. These are used to construct new melodic figures in the following variations. The cells will be used individually or in combination. For the sake of analysis by motivic cells, six different cells are chosen (Table 2).

Table 2. Six Motivic Cells Drawn from the Melody of the Theme

Cell Number	Figuration	Description
1		The interval of 3rd
2		Four sixteenth-note figuration 1
3		Three repeated notes on the same pitch
4		Four sixteenth-note figuration 2
5		Descending three-note figuration
6		Two same pitch notes with an upper neighboring tone

The following Table 3 shows how these cells are used in each variation.

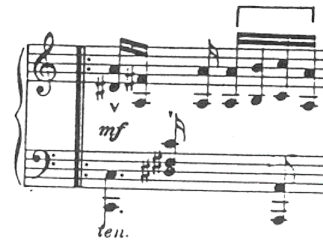
Table 3. Cells and Their Forms<sup>29</sup> Used in Each Variation

Variation	Cell Numbers and Form Used					
1	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	1 (o, i)	2 (o, r)	3	4		
3	1	2 (o, ri)	5			
4	3	5 (o, i)				
5	1 (o, i)	4	5			
6	2 (i)	4 (i)	5 (o, i)			
7	1	2 (o, i, r)	3	6		
8	1 (i)	3	5			
9 (finale)	3	4 (r)				
	1 (i)	2 (r)	5 (o, i)			
	1	3				

As can be seen in Table 3, Busoni applied at least two or more motivic cells to the new motives or figurations for each variation. Examples of how he utilized one of these motivic cells are as follows:

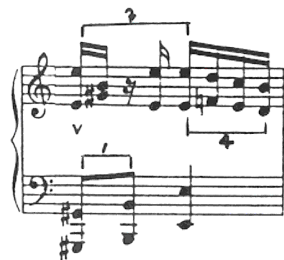
<sup>29</sup>In the forms used in each variation, o stands for original, i for inversion, r for retrograde, and ri for retrograded inversion. If only the numeral is used, it represents the original form.

Example 10. Examples of using motivic cell 2.



In some measures, as many as three different motivic cells are employed simultaneously (example 11).

Example 11. Busoni, three motivic cells used at the same time.



( Cells 1, 3 and 4 )



( Cells 1, 2, and 3 )

### *Grouping and Technical Problems*

No distinctive grouping can be isolated for performance because the set commonly maintains the same tempo and meter, with no striking dynamic or structural contrasts between any two consecutive variations. Except between variations 3 and 4, eighth rests are placed as a kind of pause after the last cadence of each variation. Based on the rhythmic and stylistic characteristics, however, the following grouping is possible.

Group 1- theme and var.1

Group 2- var. 2, 3, and 4

Group 3- var. 5 and 6

Group 4- var. 7 and 8

Group 5- coda (three more variations)

For variation 1, the melody of the theme is wholly preserved in the left-hand part. In the entire set of variations, this is the only instance of retaining the original melody. With the theme, which has the melody in the right hand, variation 1 has the effect of being the second section of a two-part form piece.

Technically, there are several figurations that are very uncomfortable to play. For example, in the theme, the widespread arpeggios in the left hand, which span up to two octaves, are not suitable for playing easily with the left hand alone. The right hand of the second half of variation 1 has double note arpeggios with different intervals.

Since variation 1 retains the original melody in the left hand part, only from variation 2 on the above-mentioned motivic cells are developed for the new melodic figurations in each variation.

Variations 2, 3, and 4 form a group. By using the same motivic cells, such as cell numbers 2, 4, and 5, variations 2 and 3 are stylistically similar. Variations 3 and 4 have no pause between them and are linked by a short passage (example 12).

Example 12. Busoni, *Variations 3 and 4*, link.



The diads, which are running with different intervals, such as thirds, fifths, sixths, and octaves alternating with single notes, are challenging technically in this group of variations. Also, larger stretches of hands are needed for some instances in variation 3, spanning the interval of tenths (example 13).

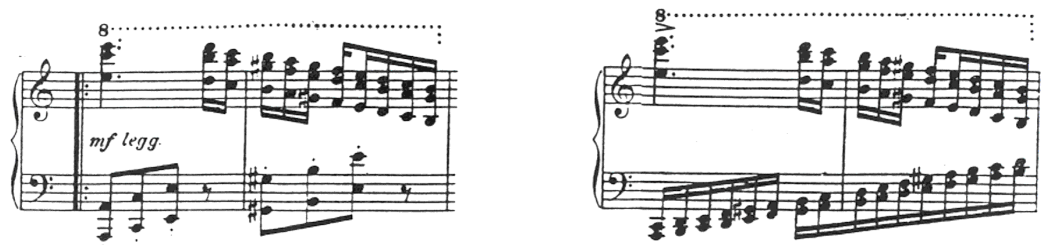
Example 13. Busoni, *Variation 3*, measures 10- 13.





The next group consists of variations 5 and 6, in which rapid octave scales and arpeggios with thirds inside are employed for both hands. These variations commonly preserve motivic cells 4 and 5. Furthermore, the right-hand figures of both variations 5 and 6 are almost identical (example 14).

Example 14. Busoni, *Variations 5 and 6*, right-hand figures.

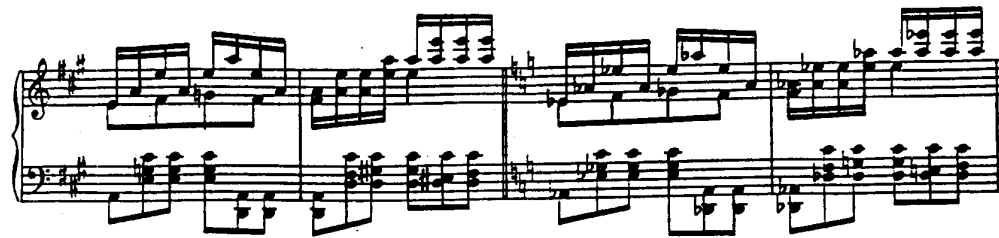


Variations 7 and 8 form the next-to-the-final group. Motivic cells 1, 2, 3, and 6 are employed for the new figurations of variation 7.

Example 15. Busoni, motivic cells used in *Variation 7*.



The coda consists of three sections, each different in keyboard layout, technical display, and harmonic innovations. Each section is comprised of sixteen measures. The first section begins with a two-measure introduction containing an ostinato-like accompaniment figure. A three-against-four rhythm dominates the section (example 16). Example 16. Busoni, *Coda*, measures 13- 16.



Technically, the widespread sempre staccato figurations in the right hand are rhythmically difficult when played against the skips in the accompaniment figure in three-against-four rhythm. The first half of the second section involves a taxing technical display of contrary motion octaves and double notes, with much chromaticism (example 17).

Example 17. Busoni, *Coda*, measures 21- 24.



This is followed by eight measures of displaced broken octaves that span the entire keyboard (example 18).

Example 18. Busoni, *Coda*, measures 29- 33.



The last section concludes the coda with sixteen measures of relentless parallel octaves, showing a series of descending harmonic changes (am- gm- fm- ebm- AM) and harmonic structures based on stacked thirds (example 19).

Example 19. Busoni, *Coda*, measures 34- 50.



Example 19. Continued.

Handwritten Roman numeral analysis for measures 38-41:

(g<sup>m</sup>;) i<sup>7</sup> i<sup>7</sup>  $\overbrace{\text{vi}^{o7} \text{v}^7}^{\text{cm (iv)}}$  vi<sup>o7</sup> i (f<sup>m</sup>;) i<sup>7</sup> ii<sup>7</sup>

Handwritten Roman numeral analysis for measures 42-45:

$\overbrace{\text{vi}^{o7} \text{v}^7}^{\text{b}^b\text{m (iv)}}$  vi<sup>o7</sup> i (e<sup>b</sup>m;) i<sup>7</sup> ii<sup>7</sup>  $\overbrace{\text{vi}^{o7} \text{v}^7}^{\text{a}^b\text{m (iv)}}$

Handwritten Roman numeral analysis for measures 46-49:

(e<sup>b</sup>m)  $\overbrace{\text{vi}^{o7} \text{v}^7}^{\text{I}_6}$  i (A:) I<sub>6</sub>  $\overbrace{\text{v}^7}^{\text{I}_6}$  I<sub>6</sub>  $\overbrace{\text{v}^7}^{\text{I}}$  I

(#IV — I)

## CHAPTER 4

### FRIEDMAN: *STUDIEN ÜBER EIN THEMA VON PAGANINI*, OP. 47B

#### Introduction

Ignaz Friedman (1882- 1948) was a Polish pianist and composer. He was born in Podgorze, near Kraków. Friedman's original name was Solomon Isaac Freudman; he was also given the Polish name of Ignacy. He began to play the piano at the age of three under the guidance of his father. At the age of eight, he could play any composition set before him and could transpose Bach's fugues at sight. His father and uncle ran a family orchestra that played Polish and Jewish music and local popular music throughout Eastern Europe and as far as Turkey. They even visited the United States for a year or so. As a teenager, Friedman toured with them. When he was sent to study in Vienna, thanks to the generosity of a doctor in Kraków, the famous piano pedagogue Leschetizky thought that Friedman was too undisciplined in his playing, but he accepted him as a student. Friedman studied piano with Leschetizky for four years and became one of his most brilliant students.<sup>30</sup> He also studied composition with Guido Adler in Vienna and Hugo Riemann in Leipzig.

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<sup>30</sup> Harold Schonberg, *The Great Pianists*, 328.

In 1904 Friedman launched an extensive career as a concert pianist, giving eventually more than 2,800 concerts in Europe, America, Australia, Japan, China, and South Africa. For his concerts and recitals, Friedman often appeared with the violinist Bronislaw Huberman. With Huberman and Casals, Friedman played Beethoven's piano trios as a part of the centenary celebration of Beethoven in Vienna in 1927.<sup>31</sup> Friedman lived in Berlin until 1914, then during World War I was domiciled in Denmark. Because Friedman was a Jew, he immigrated to Australia to escape from the Nazis in 1941.<sup>32</sup>

Friedman achieved his principal fame as a player of Chopin's music, in addition to being one of the most unusual and original pianists of the twentieth century. "His style was completely his own, and was marked by a combination of incredible technique, musical freedom, a tone that simply soared, and a naturally big approach to line, with dynamic extremes that tended to make a Chopin mazurka sound like an epic. Friedman's musical eccentricity often became the target of the musical purists of his time. He handled a melodic line inimitably – deftly outlining it against the bass, never allowing it to sag, always providing interest by a unique stress or accent."<sup>33</sup> Harold Schonberg wrote about Friedman's style:

Friedman recorded a series of Chopin mazurkas and Mendelssohn's *Songs Without Words*. Again, he does not play by the book – he was a true child of the late romantic age. Especially in the Chopin, his rhythms, accents, and volcanic approaches are apt to unsettle conservative listeners.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Robin Daniel, *Conversations with Cardus* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1976), 122.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.

<sup>33</sup> Harold Schonberg, *The Great Pianists*, 330.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

Pianist David Bar-Illan noted the interpretation of Friedman as follows:

The greater the interpretation, the more impossible to figure it out. A good example is Friedman's recordings of some of the Chopin mazurkas. I don't understand what he is doing. On purpose I try to imitate them – not to play like him of course, but to understand what he does. And yet what he does with them remains an enigma.<sup>35</sup>

Friedman prepared an annotated edition of Chopin's works in twelve volumes, published by Breitkopf and Härtel. He also edited piano compositions of Schumann and Liszt for Universal Edition in Vienna.

Friedman was himself a composer. He devoted much time and energy to composing and arranging. Among his more than ninety works, most were written for piano solo, except for a piano quintet, three string quartets, pieces for cello and piano, and several songs. Most of Friedman's early piano compositions are basically "salon" material, reflecting his background as a popular concert pianist. He wrote many tuneful piano compositions, such as *Petites Valses* Op. 12, *Fantasiestücke* Op. 45, and *Polonaise Lyrik* Opp. 53, 60, and 72. There also is a long list of arrangements.<sup>36</sup>

#### *Studien Über Ein Thema von Paganini, Op. 47b*

This set of variations was written in 1914 and was dedicated to Julius Röntgen, a Dutch pianist. The set consists of a theme and seventeen variations, with the last

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<sup>35</sup> Dubal, *Reflections from the Keyboard*, 62.

<sup>36</sup> N. Cardus, "Pianist in Exile" *International Piano Library Bulletin* 2, No. 6 (1968): 6.

variation being an extended finale. Friedman called the set “Studies” instead of “variations.” He must have considered his entire Op. 47 to be a didactic work since his Op.47a also was titled “Studies.”

This set of variations, Op.47b, displays many of the new compositional techniques of the early twentieth century, such as multi-tonality, non-functional harmonic progression, sudden shift of tonality, synthetic scale, modified cadences, and dissonant chords, in addition to the typical use of various seventh and ninth chords. Technically, it requires formidable dexterity, such as thirds, sixths, octave runs, and rapid alternating hands with different intervals. Musically, some of these variations represent the most beautiful and lyrical melodies of the late Romanticism, as one can read his intentions of giving the performers not just technical challenges but also stimuli for the musical mind.

### *Theme*

Friedman kept Paganini’s original contour of melody, key, and rhythm in his theme. He also retained the basic harmonic progression of Paganini’s original theme. Friedman only added a left-hand accompaniment in arpeggiated chordal figures, generally spanning the interval of a tenth when the harmony changes. Also, minute changes were made to the length and harmony of Paganini’s original theme. Friedman modified the structure of Paganini’s theme, 11:4:11 8 11, to 11:4:11:8:11, changing the number of measures from sixteen to twenty-four. By repeating the second section, Friedman made the theme an asymmetrical binary form. A half diminished seventh chord (iiø) was

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added in harmonizing the melody in order to suit itself to the late Romantic period. He also added an augmented sixth chord at the cadences of each section: first, I – Aug.6<sup>th</sup> – V, second, Aug.6<sup>th</sup> – V7 – i. Friedman also altered the dynamic of the theme *from* Paganini's *piano* to *forte*.

### *Structure*

In the succeeding seventeen variations, the structure of the theme, II:4:II:8:II, is retained in about half of them (variations 2, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, and 16). Friedman also engaged additional seven variants of this structure in his variations as can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4. Various Structures Used by Friedman

Structure	Variation Number(s)
II:4:II:8:II	2, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 16
II 8 I 16II	1, 7
II:4:II 8 II	4
II 8 II:8:II	14, 15
II 4 II:4:II	9
II 4 I 8 II	11
II 8 II:8:II 2 II	3
II:7:II:17:II	5

Generally, some kinds of changes are made in the written-out repetition section, whether it is a repetition with an inverted texture, a different tessitura, or a different harmonization. In variation 1, each section has a written-out repetition, making the structure ll 8 l 16 ll. In this case, the written-out repetition sections are texturally inverted ones of the previous phrases. Variation 3 also has a written-out repetition for the first section and a two-measure codetta added to the end of the regular structure, making the structure of the variation unique.

Variation 5 also has an unusual structure: seven measures for the first section and seventeen measures for the second section, of which the last seven measures are a return of the first section. Thus, variation 5 takes a rounded binary form ll:A:ll:A'A:ll in place of the original theme's asymmetrical simple binary. The phrase structure of this variation 5 shows another significant structural feature. In the returning A section, the order of the two phrases is inverted, so that the second phrase of the original section A becomes the first, and the first phrase the second, representing a phrase-structure of a a'b a'a – a palindrome structure, like that of a mirror form.

In variation 7, which has the structure of ll 8 l 16 ll, each written-out repetition becomes a textural inversion of the previous phrase, as in variation 3. Variations 14 and 15 are in the same formal structure, l 8 ll:8:ll, having a written-out repetition for the first section only. In these variations, the repeated second phrases have different harmonic progressions.

### *Harmony and Key*

The key, A minor, is retained in most of the variations (12 out of 17). Three variations (variations 4, 13, and 14) are in A major (the parallel major key to A minor) and one (variation 10) in F major (a submediant key of A minor). Variation 15 is in F# minor, which is a relative minor key of the A major of the preceding variation 14.

The basic contour of the harmonic progression of the theme and the root progression of A-D-G-C are generally retained as main bonds between the theme and the succeeding variations, although, to a great extent, several variations are free in treatment of harmony.

Friedman used various seventh and ninth chords, as well as the Neapolitan and augmented sixth chords for different color effects. The Neapolitan chord (usually Bb chord in this set of variations) replaces the iiø chord of the second phrase of the second section in many variations (variations 1, 2, 6, 7, 12, 14, 16, and 17).

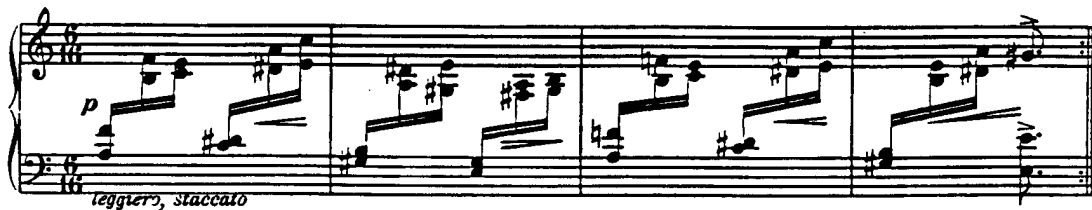
In variation 1, no augmented sixth chords are used for both of the cadences in each section. Instead, a Neapolitan chord is employed in place of iiø for the first part of section two. For the written-out repetition part, the usual root progression of A-D-G-C in the bass part is omitted for the newly employed scalar figurations, which are in the same keys (D minor and C major, respectively). Both scales are harmonic types; one for D minor harmonic scale and the other for C major harmonic scale (example 20).

Example 20. Friedman, *Variation I*, measures 17- 20.



Variation 2 retains the same harmonic progression of the theme except for the use of N6 in the second half of the second section. This variation is characterized by the use of many appoggiaturas (example 21).

Example 21. Friedman, *Variation 2*, measures 1-4.



In variation 3, the original harmonic progression of the theme is completely abandoned for new chromatic harmonies. The usual progressions of  $i - V$  for the beginning of each of the two phrases in the first section are changed into  $i7 - v$  and  $i7 - bV$ , giving some degree of ambiguity to the tonality. After that, for measures 3-4 and 7-8, the harmonic progressions to the chromatic mediant ( $E_b-G$  and  $Bb-D$ ) are employed,  $G$  and  $D$  chords being altered mediant of  $E_b$  and  $Bb$  chords respectively (example 22).

Example 22. Friedman, *Variation 3*, measures 1-8.

The musical score for Example 22, Friedman, *Variation 3*, measures 1-8, is presented in two systems. The first system (measures 1-4) begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The second system (measures 5-8) concludes with a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic. The bass line in the first system shows a chromatic descent: *i7*, *v*, *b7 (Eb)*, and *(G)*. The second system shows an ascending chromatic scale in the bass line: *i7*, *b7 (Eb)*, *(Bb)*, and *(D)*. The treble line features complex chordal textures and melodic fragments.

The first part of the second section (mm.9-12) engages a series of major- minor seventh sonority in chromatic descend (*Eb7- D7- C#7- C7*). From measures 11 to 14, the first bass notes of each measure constitute an ascending chromatic scale (*b- c- db- d- eb- e*) (example 23). There also are many instances of using non-harmonic tones, such as suspensions and cambiatas.

Example 23. Friedman, *Variation 3*, measures 9-18.

The image displays a musical score for Variation 3, measures 9-18. It consists of three systems of piano and bass staves. The first system includes dynamic markings *poco f*, *Il. volta ppp*, and handwritten chord annotations:  $E^b_2 (\nabla^3_{ab})$ ,  $D^7 (\nabla^3_{g})$ , and  $C^b_2 (\nabla^3_{fa})$ . The second system features the instruction *con passione* and a handwritten chord  $C^7 (\nabla^3_{f})$ . The third system includes dynamic markings *pp*, *rit.*, and *ppp*. The notation includes various accidentals, slurs, and articulation marks.

This whole section creates a palette of harmonic color, conveying no particular tonality orientation and producing no sense of functional harmonic gravitational direction. This passage can best be described as chord “succession” rather than harmonic “progression.”

Variation 4 is also harmonically renovated, in that it has different harmonic progression and key, and shows a use of an appoggiatura chord. By not giving the prominent tonic chord immediately and by using so many non-harmonic tones, it generates a feeling of tonal ambiguity until one hears the clear tonic chord in the final measure. Also, by using of an appoggiatura chord in many places, Friedman extended

his harmonic language. This chordal sonority should be regarded as nonfunctional or non-essential (example 24).

Example 24. Friedman, *Variation 4*, measure 5, reduction.

7 - 6 - 5  
6 - 4 - 5  
I

Another example of non-essential harmony is found in variation 5 (example 25). This seemingly complicated harmonic progression is only a tonic- dominant movement with linear, voice-leading gesture.

Example 25. Friedman, *Variation 5*, measures 1-7, reduction.

i - (I) - (v) - V  
i - (I) - (v) - V  
I

In this variation 5, several compositional devices, such as changing modes, sudden shift of keys, and Picardy cadence, are also found. An example of sudden shift of keys is seen in measures 12 through 16.

The deliberate use of a semitone clash, which helps to make a harsh sound, is shown in variation 6. In the first phrase of the second section, the usual root progression of A-D-G-C is incorporated with the elaborated harmonic progression of  $\text{vii}^\circ 7$ - Aug.6<sup>th</sup>- V7- i, creating new sound effect of multi-tonality (example 26).

Example 26. Friedman, *Variation 6*, harmonic progression of measures 5-8.

$\text{vii}^\circ 7$ - Aug.6 <sup>th</sup> - V7- i	$\text{vii}^\circ 7$ - Aug.6 <sup>th</sup> - V7- I
	over
A	D      G      C

At the final cadential part, a kind of synthetic scale (Gypsy minor scale) is utilized just before the elaborated linear cadence (example 27).

Example 27. Friedman, *Variation 6*, measures 11-12.





For the first section of variation 8, two kinds of harmonic devices are used simultaneously. First, an augmented sixth chord is used on the first beat of measures 1 through 3 in a fashion of appoggiatura chords. The C and A notes of the augmented sixth chord are held over to the next chord as common notes. Therefore, the augmented sixth chord becomes an appoggiatura chord (mm. 1 and 3). In addition, the supposed V chords are replaced by v chords at the end of this phrase giving an illusion of identifying this piece as E minor instead of the original A minor (example 28).

Example 28. Friedman, *Variation 8*, measures 1-4.

am: A<sup>6</sup> i A<sup>6</sup> v<sup>7</sup> A<sup>6</sup> i A<sup>6</sup> (v)

Because the harmonic progression of the second section is also changed radically, it is difficult to identify this piece as A minor until the final cadence is sounded.

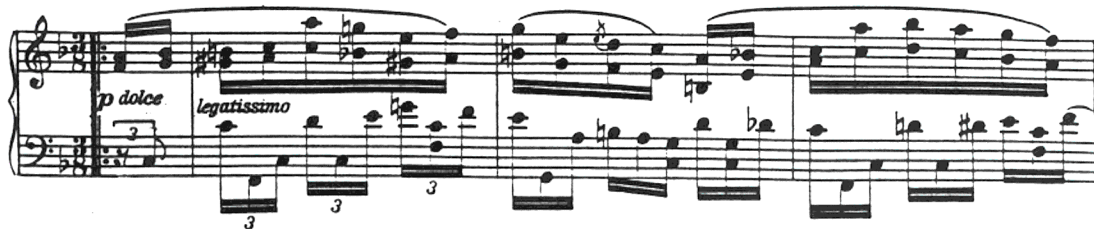
Example 29. Friedman, *Variation 8*, harmonic progression, measures 5-12, reduction.

am: v<sup>7</sup> I B<sup>b</sup> v<sup>7</sup> I (vii<sup>02</sup> = vii<sup>02</sup> / Em(v)) i v<sup>7</sup> I  
(non-essential app. chord)

Together with the nonfunctional use of augmented sixth chords in the first half, the temporary tonicizations (in remote keys; Bb, Ab, and gm) in the second half allow the feeling of certain tonality orientation to be escaped. This is a good example of Friedman's tendency toward tonal ambiguity.

Variation 10 is a good example of using non-harmonic tones to make a piece with a simple harmonic progression sound like a complicated one (example 30).

Example 30. Friedman, *Variation 10*, measures 1-3.



Again, although the basic harmonic progression of the first section of variation 13 is simple (I- V- I- V), the tone cluster-like chords make the sound of the variation very harsh. Without its tuneful melody, it could sound like atonal music (example 31).

Example 31. Friedman, *Variation 13*, measures 1-4.



This variation also has a different harmonic progression for the second section and an elaborated final cadence.

Variation 14 is characterized by the extensive use of pedal point. In this case, the pedal point is a fifth (example 32).

Example 32. Friedman, *Variation 14*, measures 1-4.



The final phrase of this variation reveals such compositional devices as change of modes (i) and a modified cadence (iv- vii<sup>o</sup>7- I) (example 33). This whole process could also be interpreted as a tonic prolongation with non-essential harmony over it. The linear voice-leading melodic gesture is represented as b9- 8- #7- 8 over I chord.

Example 33. Friedman, *Variation 14*, harmonic progression of the final phrase.

Harmonic analysis diagram:

A: N6 (i) vii<sup>o</sup>7 I

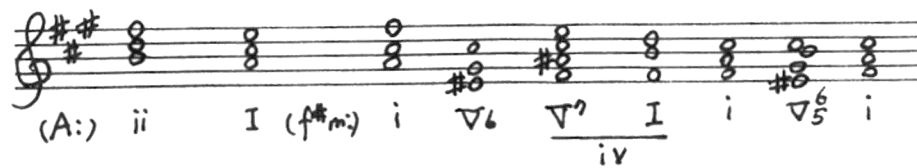
9 8 7 8

( ————— I )

In variation 15, the V chords are exchanged with v chords for the first section (i- v- i- V/VII- I/VII- i- v- i- V), representing the harmonic device of change of modes.

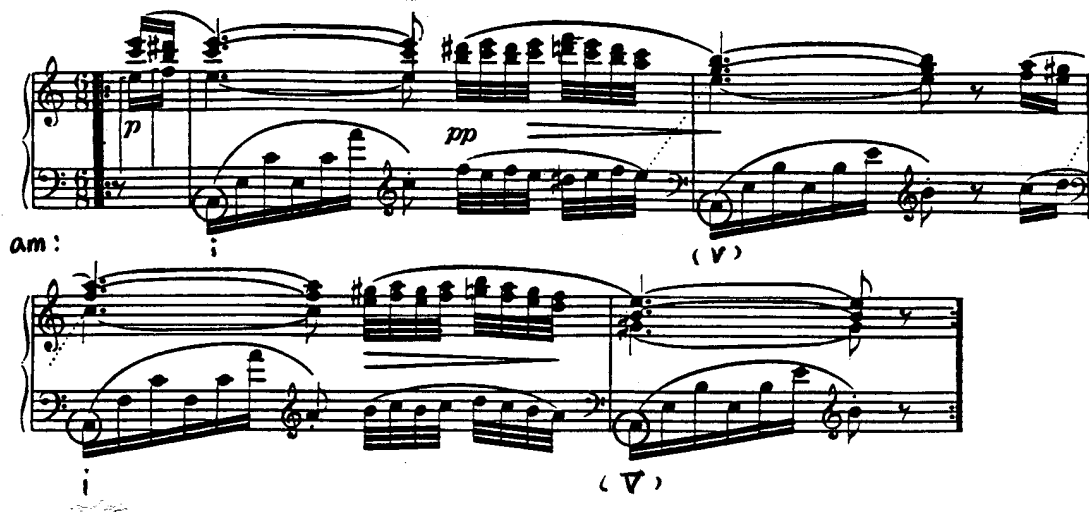
Besides the key of F# minor, the harmonic progression of the second section is another altered element from the original theme in this variation (example 34).

Example 34. Friedman, *Variation 15*, harmonic progression (reduction), measures 9-16.



In variation 16, with the pedal point and the alternating use of V and v chords found in the first section the entire process becomes another example of non-essential harmony over tonic prolongation.

Example 35. Friedman, *Variation 16*, measures 1-4.



The use of octave glissando at the end of the piece is another feature of Friedman's modified cadences in this set of variations.

In the finale, the harmony in several cadences is modified. They utilize augmented sixth chords in places of the usual V or V7. The final cadence is one such example, using the harmonic progression of Aug.6<sup>th</sup> – i.

Example 36. Friedman, *Finale*, measures 50-51.



### *Rhythm and Meter*

Friedman was diverse in choosing rhythms for the motives of the succeeding variations. Every motive engages a unique rhythmic pattern of its own. There are seventeen different rhythmic patterns for the motives of the seventeen variations. Even if the basic rhythmic patterns look alike, as in variation 7 and 14, the articulations of the rhythms and the accompaniment patterns are different. Variation 7 is the only variation which uses the unaltered rhythmic pattern of the original

theme (  ).

The original meter of the theme (2/4) is used only in five variations (variations 3, 7, 11, 14, and 15). There are as many as six different meters employed in other

variations; 2/8 (variation 1), 6/16 (variation 2), 6/8 (variations 4, 16, and 17), 3/8 (variations 5 and 10), 4/8 (variation 9), and 3/4 (variations 6, 8, 12, and 13). For the finale, there is a change of meters from 6/8 to 2/4 at the end of the piece, making it the only instance of this compositional device in the whole set.

### *Tempo and Dynamics*

Friedman assigned different tempo marks in the seventeen variations. Although several variations share the same tempo mark, they contain different auxiliary descriptions. For example, both variations 5 and 15 are in *andante*, but the descriptions that follow the tempo marks are different: *sostenuto*, *serioso* for variation 5 and *mesto* for variation 15. Among the seventeen variations only variation 1 does not have any auxiliary description before or after the tempo mark. Others have such descriptions as *con eleganza*, *distinto*, *giocoso*, and *pensieroso*.

Friedman utilized a wide range of dynamic signs, from *ppp* to *fff*. Variation 3 has one *ppp* and three *pp* marks, while variation 17 has one *fff* and three *ff* marks. Variation 8 shows a unique use of dynamic signs in the first two measures. It starts with a *mf* and a *crescendo*, after that a *p*, and finally a *decrescendo* (example 37). The reason for this peculiar indication is discussed later.

Example 37. Friedman, *Variation 8*, measures 1-2.



Friedman appeared to be fond of extreme dynamic contrasts as would engage a *crescendo* from *ff* and a *diminuendo* from *ppp* (example 38).

Example 38. Friedman, *Variation 17*, measure 19, and *Variation 3*, measure 18.



### *Motivic Developments*

The same six motivic cells that were used in the analysis of the Busoni set of variations are also applied for the Friedman set of variations. The following table shows how these cells are used in each variation.

Table 5. Cells and Their Forms<sup>37</sup> used in Each Variation

Variation Number	Cell Numbers and Forms Used
1	4( i ) 5(o,i) 6(o,i)
2	2 5( i )
3	3 4 5( i )
4	2( i ) 5
5	2 3 5 6
6	1 2(o, r) 3 4( r ) 5(o, r) 6
7	2( r ) 4 5 6(o, i)
8	1 2( r ) 4(o, r) 6( i )
9	1(o, i) 2 6(o, i)
10	2(o, i) 4(o, r)
11	2 3 6( i )
12	4(o, r, ri) 5(o, i)
13	1(o, i) 2(o, i, r) 4 6( i )

<sup>37</sup> In the forms used in each variation, o stands for original, i for inversion, r for retrograde, and ri for retrograded inversion. If only the numeral is used, it represents the original form.



Table 5.continued.

14	2      3      6					
15	1( i )    2(o, i)    3      4(o, i)    5(o, i)    6( i )					
16	4(o,r, ri)      6(o, i)					
17	Section I	1      4(r, ri)    5(o, i)    6				
	Section II	1      3      6( i )				
	Section III	2(o, r)    4(o, i)				

As seen above, Friedman utilized various motivic cells for each variation in a variety of ways. He not only employed the motivic cells as an original form, but also variant forms, such as inversion, retrograde, retrograded inversion, and even partial forms of these. The following example shows how motivic cell 2 is used in a variety of forms in this set of variations.

Example 39. Forms of motivic cell 2.

Original, *Variation 14*, measures 1-2.



Example 39. Continued.

Inversion, *Variation 10*, measures 1-2.



Retrograde, *Variation 7*, measures 9-10.



Retrograded inversion, *Variation 13*, measures 2-3.



Example 39. Continued.

Partial, *Variation 5*, measures 8-9.



Sometimes, the cells are hidden between hands or in the inner voices (example 40).

Example 40. Cells used in disguise.

Cell 5, *Variation 11*, measure 1 (spread in between hands).

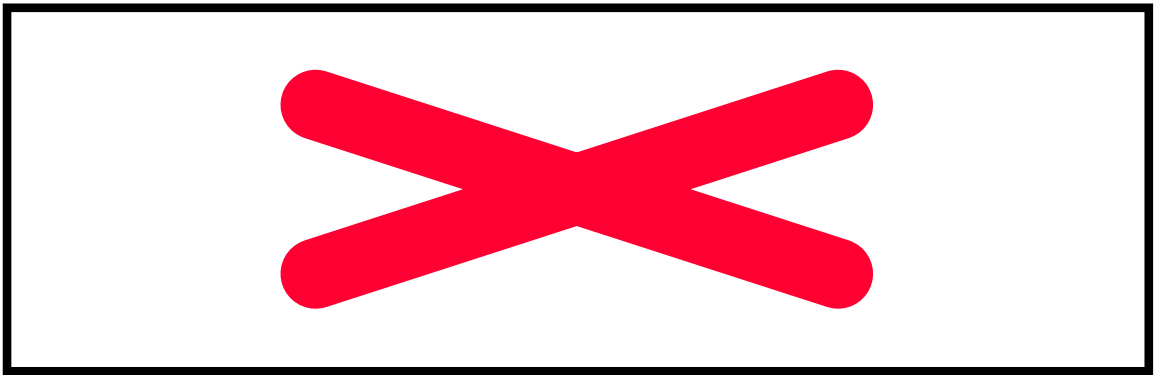


Cell 2, *Variation 6*, measure 1 (placed in inner voice).



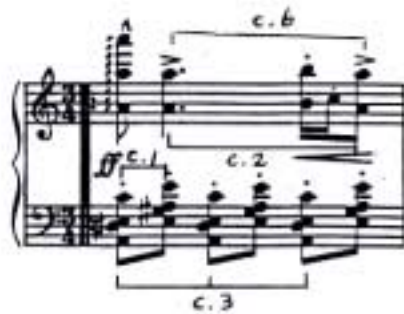
One of Friedman's most striking examples of using motivic cells in this set of variations is that some of the seemingly new melodies of the variations are derived from the motivic cells only (example 41).

Example 41. Friedman, *Variation 13*, measures 1-4.



Similar examples are found in variations 3, 6, 10, and 16. As in the case of Busoni, Friedman also employed more than two motivic cells at the same time (example 42).

Example 42. Friedman, *Variation 6*, measure 1.



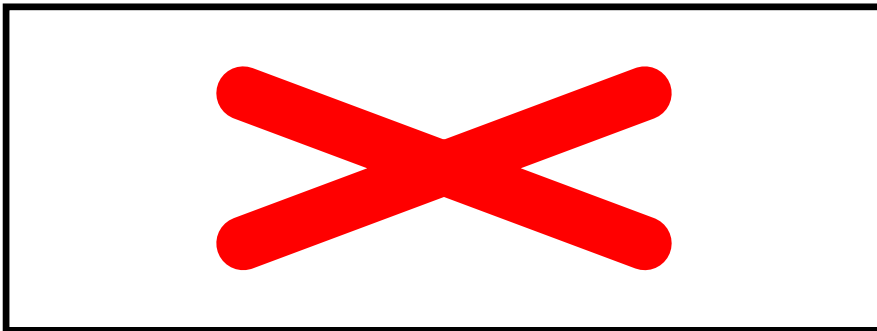
Numerous examples of similar usages of this can be found everywhere, since many of Friedman's variations in this set are written in multi-layered textures. Among the

seventeen variations, only variation 15 and the finale utilize all the six motivic cells in this set of variations.

### *Grouping and Technical Problems*

Variations 1 and 2 form the first group as a pair of technical études. Both are in fast tempi, *vivo* and *presto*, and share a similar rhythm. In variation 1, performers should play broken figurations consisting of intervals of the seventh and ninth, which are actually diatonic scales with octave displacement, while the other hand has to deal with rapid double thirds (example 43).

Example 43. Friedman, *Variation 1*, measures 1-4.



Variation 2 also is made up of diads with different intervals. The beginning motive contains motivic cell 5, which should be clearly brought out. Although the meter of variation 1 is 2/8, which is different from that (6/16) of variation 2, the triplets of variation 1 make the rhythm sound exactly like that of variation 2. In effect, the rhythm of variation 1 becomes identical to that of variation 2 so that the two variations are connected smoothly, with no rhythmic change.

Variations 3, 4, and 5 make a group through commonly shared lyrical melodies and rich chromatic harmonies. As noted earlier, they show great freedom both

harmonically and structurally, yet are comparatively soft in dynamics. Among the three variations, only the middle variation (No. 4) is in a different key (A major) and different tempo (*allegretto*), thus allowing this variation to be considered as a contrasting B section of a bigger three-part form (ABA'). Variations 3 and 5, which could be represented by A and A', respectively, are similar in character, with lyrical melodies and widespread left-hand accompaniments.

Table 6. Comparisons of *Variations 3, 4, and 5*.

Variation	Var. 3	Var. 4	Var. 5
Section	A	B	A'
Tempo	Slow	Fast	Slow
Key	a	A	a
Accompaniment	Broken chords	Chordal	Broken chords

In this group, only variation 4 is technically challenging. It displays rapid scales and arpeggios mixed together, as well as three against four rhythms. Variation 5 presents altogether another problem in performance. Since it has a multi-layered texture, several independent voices are to be traced. In some places as many as five different voices are moving simultaneously. Performers must consider the various proportional dynamics for each voice when playing the repetitions.

The next group, variations 6 and 7, has the same key and dynamic range. They both are technically demanding. Variation 6 has ostinato-like rhythms for left hand in the

Variation 7 deals with continuous diads made up of different intervals throughout the piece. The following fingering for the right hand part of the first part of this variation will help to facilitate this passage (example 44).

3 4 3 5 3 5 3 5 3 4 3 5 3 5 3 5  
 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1

*f non legato, brillante*

Example 45. Friedman, *Variation* 7, measure 8.

(r.h.) 5 3 2 1 5 3 2 1 3

1

(l.h.) 1 4 1 4 5

The next group consists of variations 8, 9, and 10, each having different musical characteristics. Variation 8 is a mazurka-like piece, and variation 9 is étude-like, while variation 10 is a lyrical song. In order to project the mazurka rhythmic characteristics, which usually have accents on the second or third beats, Friedman marks each first beat to be played rather softly (example 46). This explains the unusual use of dynamics mentioned earlier.

Example 46. Friedman, *Variation 8*, measures 1-4.



The technical problems of variation 9 come mainly from the fact that it should be played with the dynamic of *pp*. Variation 10 has a multi-layered texture in which several voices are moving simultaneously. The performer is presented with a challenge to bring out these voices properly and musically.

Variation 11 and 12 can be a group in that they are in *allegro* and étude-like in character, although one makes use of *staccato* and the other *legato*. They utilize the same key and the same rhythmic pattern, but contrast in the use of dynamics and articulation. In variation 11, dividing notes between the two hands in the first phrase of the second section could be helpful in solving the technical difficulties (example 47).



Example 47. Friedman, *Variation 11*, measures 5-8.



In Variation 12, extremes of technical difficulties are encountered. Both hands deal with fast-running diads with different combinations of intervals. No easy solution other than proper fingering patterns suitable to each player's hands and practice are recommended to solve this extreme technical demand. Through the entire set of variations, Friedman showed technical originality by presenting awkward and almost unplayable passages. Other than the above mentioned examples (examples 44, 45 and 47), several more figurations can be illustrated (example 48).

Example 48. Figurations of technical originality.

(var. 9 , m 5 )

(var. 12 , mm 4-5 )

*non legato sempre*

(var. 17 , mm 9-11 )

Variations 13 and 14 form a group with the same key of A major (a parallel major key to A minor). They are contrasting in tempi; variation 13 is slow and beautifully flowing, while variation 14 is fast and has a dance-like character emphasized by reiterated pedal points. These variations are distinguished by harsh dissonant sounds. To reduce the dissonant sound, the top melodies should be brought out and carefully shaped in these variations.

Variations 15 and 16 contain beautiful song-like material that is a preparation for the energetic and bravura finale. Variation 15 has a multi-layered texture, with four different voices that move in different rhythms. A string quartet-like sound should be

imagined in order to play this piece with effectiveness. The octave glissando and the cadential chords at the end of variation 16 set the mood for the much extended finale-coda.

The triple-length finale (51 measures) has three sections, employing all the seven motivic cells. The two featuring altered chords, Neapolitan and augmented sixth, are used in all three sections, and the root progression of A-D-G-C is also retained. This finale is a showcase for Friedman's technical displays with chords in alternating hands, octave scales and arpeggios, repeated notes, and diads with different intervals.

## CHAPTER 5

### MUCZYNSKI: *PAGANINI VARIATIONS* ( DESPERATE MEASURES )

#### FOR PIANO, OP. 48

##### Introduction

Robert Muczynski was born in Chicago on March 19, 1929. His father's parents immigrated to Chicago from Warsaw, Poland. Muczynski's father was a pressman, and his mother, a Slovak descendant, came to the United States in 1910. He has a sister, Gloria, for whom this piece was dedicated.

Muczynski began his piano studies at the age of five and attended DePaul University in Chicago, where he received his bachelor of music (1950) and master of music (1952) degrees in piano performance. He studied piano with Walter Knopfer, who had studied with a pupil of Franz Liszt. He began composing under the tutelage of Alexander Tcherepnin while at DePaul. For his graduation performance Muczynski played his own composition, *Divertimento for Piano and Orchestra* Op. 2, with the DePaul University Orchestra. It was through Tcherepnin's encouragement and guidance that Muczynski eventually turned to composing full time.

Muczynski's first important commission came from the Fromm Music Foundation in 1953 for his *Symphony No. 1*, Op. 5. For this work, he received valuable comments from Fritz Reiner. In 1954, at the age of twenty-five, he became the youngest

composer to receive a commission from the Louisville Orchestra Commission Project. On January 12, 1955, Muczynski appeared as a soloist with the Louisville Orchestra under the baton of Robert Whitney in the premiere of his *Piano Concerto No. 1*.

In 1955-1956 Muczynski taught composition, piano, and theory at DePaul. Then, from 1956 to 1958, he served as head of the piano department at Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa. On February 4, 1958, Muczynski made his New York debut at Carnegie Hall, presenting a program of his own piano works. He also performed his *Piano Concerto No. 1* with the Chicago Symphony in March 1958. After receiving a two-year grant from the Ford Foundation, he became a composer-in-residence at the University of Arizona, where he served as chairman of the composition department until his retirement in 1988.

In 1962 Muczynski received a commission from the Chicago Little Symphony. The work, *Dance Movement* Op. 17 premiered on August 24, 1963. This work was also performed in Washington, D.C., with the National Symphony Orchestra in 1965. In 1975 the Western Art Trio commissioned his *Second Piano Trio* Op. 36, and they have since performed it in Europe, Asia, Australia, and Mexico. In 1980 Muczynski wrote *Masks* Op. 40, which was commissioned by the Gina Bachauer International Piano Competition as a required piece for all finalists. He also received a commission from saxophonist Trent Kynaston to write *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Chamber Orchestra* Op. 41. For this work, Muczynski received a nomination for the Pulitzer Prize in Music. Among many other commissions, the commission by the United States Information Agency's Artistic Ambassadors Program produced *Dream Cycle* Op. 44, and

this work was performed in Denmark, Norway, and the U.S.S.R. in 1983. After thirty years of teaching, Muczynski is now free to compose, travel, and perform.

Muczynski's influences may be traced to a number of sources. Traditional education led him to an early appreciation of formal clarity and effective pianism. Prokofiev, Bartók, Barber, and Shostakovitch, with their lyricism, percussive treatment of the keyboard, and attention to details of formal structure, influenced Muczynski's musical style. However, it was Tcherepnin who influenced Muczynski the most, on both personal and musical levels. Tcherepnin's enduring support of artistic integrity gave Muczynski the strength to pursue his own standard of excellence, regardless of outside criticism. His advice on compositional techniques proved invaluable to Muczynski's development in expanded harmonic vocabulary, skillful manipulation of thematic materials, and experimentation with formal structure.<sup>38</sup>

Unlike the works of many other twentieth-century composers, Muczynski's musical style defies specific categorization or stereotyped labels. His works are frequently labeled as neo-classic, neo-romantic or neo-baroque, but how his music is categorized depends upon the particular piece. It is, however, never atonal or dodecaphonic. Muczynski is essentially a tonal composer, although the actual sonorities and harmonic progressions are borne of the twentieth century.

Muczynski's style of writing for the piano is highly idiomatic. As an accomplished pianist, he is well aware of the various capabilities of his chosen

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<sup>38</sup> Valerie Clare Cisler, "The Piano Sonatas of Robert Muczynski" D.M.A. document, University of Oklahoma, 1993, 418.

instrument. He utilizes its full expressive range, from an eloquent lyricism to a highly motoric and percussive style. Technically, his works can be demanding, with abrupt leaps in register, fast passage work, and multi-layered textures, in addition to the detailed articulation, dynamic, pedal and expressive markings. But his works usually sound more difficult than they are to play.<sup>39</sup>

#### *Paganini Variations* (Desperate Measures) for Piano, Op. 48

Muczynski's *Paganini variations* consist of a theme and twelve variations. The set was written in 1994 and published by the Theodore Presser Company in 1996. This work is basically tonal, although it contains many contemporary compositional devices, such as bitonality and bimodality, change of modes, tone clusters, quartal and quintal harmonies, change of meters, parallelism, and synthetic scales. The general tonal center of this work is A, and only one (variation 5) out of twelve variations does not end on A.

#### *Theme*

Like the two previously examined composers, Muczynski, in general, retained the melody, key, and general harmonic contour of the original theme of Paganini for his own theme. Slight melodic changes are made in the second half by octave doublings of the first beats of each measure and in the second-to-last measure by replacing the original melody with a scalar figuration of a synthetic scale (Gypsy minor scale).

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 422.

The structure of the theme is II:4:II:8:II, like that of Friedman's modified structure. But Muczynski wrote two different endings for the final cadence. For the first section, root notes are placed for each beat spread in a wide range of the keyboard for left-hand accompaniment. This first section shows an octave parallelism between both hands. For the accompaniment of the second section, Muczynski simply broke the chords or doubled the right-hand melodies. The final cadence is a kind of a linear ending in contrary motion, thus modifying the Paganini's original. The harmonic progression is almost the same as Paganini's implied harmony, with no ii° and N6 chords.

### *Structure*

The structure of the theme II:4:II:8:II is never used again in the succeeding twelve variations. Each variation has a unique structural frame of its own. Actually, Muczynski utilized twelve different structures for the twelve variations in this set. By doing this Muczynski expanded the area of applying variation technique to the structures of succeeding variations; as the following table shows.

Table 7. Structures Used in Each Variation

Variation	Structure	Variation	Structure
1	II 16 II 16 II	7	II 8 II:8:II
2	II 8 II:6:II	8	II 8 I 17 II
3	II:2:II:8:II	9	II 11 I 7 II
4	II 8 I 16 II	10	II 16 II:13:II
5	II 8 I 9 II	11	II 6 I 8 II
6	II 16 II:8:II	12	II 10 I 26 II



Among these, only the structures of variations 1, 3, 4, 6, and 7 are considered as being derived from the original structure of the theme. Others are asymmetrical, or freely used structures. Because there are so many kinds of structural frames for the variations, the phrase structures are also diversified.

In variation 2, the phrase structure is represented as 4+4+4+2, the last phrase being reduced to two measures with different meter (6/8). Variation 5 has an additional measure for the last phrase, representing 4+4+4+5 as its phrase structure.

From variation 8 to the last (variation 12), each variation has an odd-numbered, asymmetrical phrase structure.

Table 8. Phrase Structures of Variations 8–12

Variation	Number of Phrases	Phrase Structure
8	7	4+4+4+3+4+3+3
9	5	3+4+4+4+3
10	7	4+4+4+4+4+4+5
11	5	2+2+2+4+4
12	7	6+4+4+6+4+6+6

Variations 8 and 9 have three-measure long phrases, which are rather unusual in length. Variation 10 shows an extra one measure for the last phrase, as in the case of variation 5. Variation 10 also becomes the only one that begins on an upbeat in the entire set of variations.

Except for variations 11 and 12, all the variations of this set take the simple binary as their formal frame. In variations 11 and 12, there are returning sections for each variation, making the forms rounded binaries (A B A').

### *Harmony and Key*

Along with other twentieth-century composers, Muczynski also experimented in varying degrees with the harmony. With Muczynski, harmonies are generally tertian and frequently include seventh and ninth chords. Furthermore, he experimented with sounds from the upper partials of the overtone series, incorporating widely spaced eleventh and even thirteenth chords. He also used harsh dissonances which are typically the result of melodic movement of inner voices or above a static bass (ostinato or pedal point). There are also many instances of using added-notes, parallelism, bitonality, quartal and quintal harmonies, and concurrent use of major and minor thirds.

Another feature of Muczynski's harmonic vocabulary is his tendency toward tonal ambiguity, the effect of which is created in several ways: by sudden change in chord quality; by use of added-tone chords- especially utilizing minor seconds, tritones and major sevenths; by use of bichords and equidistant chords; by non-functional chord progressions and non-traditional cadence preparation; and by using remote relationships among the various pitch centers of the pieces. His harmony also has a jazz flavor, which can be identified by the use of consecutive seventh chords of various kinds and blue scale.

Variation 1 engages a number of harmonic devices, such as pedal point, changing modes, octatonic scale, added-tone chords, bitonality, and quartal harmonies. Example 49 shows uses of both octatonic scale and bitonality.

Example 49. Muczynski, *Variation 1*, measures 17-18.



The harmonic progression of the final cadence is non-functional both in chords used and in preparation (example 50).

Example 50. Muczynski, *Variation 1*, harmonic progression, measures 29-32.

ii – (Ab – Gb) – vii $\blacktriangleright$  7/V – i

In variation 2, Muczynski made use of concurrent major and minor thirds and bitonality, as well as a non-traditional cadential pattern like that of variation 1.

Variations 3 and 4 show the use of quintal harmonies with added seconds (example 51).

Example 51. Muczynski, *Variation 4*, measures 1-2.



The seventh chords made of augmented triads and major sevenths are frequently used in many variations, including variation 5, revealing jazz influence (example 52).

Example 52. Muczynski, *Variation 5*, measures 9-12.



Variation 5 also contains instances of the use of concurrent major and minor thirds (m. 5) and bitonality (m. 16).

Variation 6 utilizes such harmonic devices as bitonality (m. 7), harmonic major scale on A (mm. 17-19), and ninth chords (mm. 4 and 16). Variation 7 shows quintal chords in broken form and inverted seventh chords with a sharp semitone clash (example 53).

Example 53. Muczynski, *Variation 7*, measures 1-2 and 5-6.



A simultaneous use of a quintal chord and an octatonic scale is seen in the fourth measure of variation 8. Also, added-tone chords similar to tone-cluster chords are used in measure 7. The bass line from measures 9 to 12 makes use of the Mixolydian scale, with the sixth scale degree tone flatted. Examples of quintal chords are found in measures 13 and 20. Consecutive use of different seventh chords (minor triad + major seventh and augmented triad + minor seventh) is another harmonic feature of this variation (mm. 8, 16, and 18). Variation 9 also shows the use of added-tone chords and various seventh chords (example 54).

Example 54. Muczynski, *Variation 9*, measure 10.



Measure 13 of variation 9 is an example of the use of bitonality. The harmonic progression of the final cadence is modified from traditional usage. The penultimate chord, which is normally V, is changed to v, having the major third tone (G#) and third scale degree tone (C) as non-harmonic tones (example 55).

Example 55. Muczynski, *Variation 9*, measures 17-18.



Other than the various seventh chords, Muczynski used many ninth and eleventh chords in this variation (mm. 1, 4, 11, 15, and 16).

In variation 10, Muczynski utilized many kinds of seventh chords (example 56) for the first section and quartal chords for the second.

Example 56. Muczynski, *Variation 10*, measures 1-2, various seventh chords.



Variation 11 shows recurrent use of the same harmonic progression as ostinato harmonies. Variation 12 makes use of the octatonic scales extensively (mm. 9-10, 21-24, and 31).

Example 57. Muczynski, *Variation 12*, measures 9-10.



This variation also shows a jazz effect (m. 36) and use of eleventh chords (mm. 21 and 23).

### *Rhythm*

In this set of variations, Muczynski utilized various rhythmic patterns for the motives of each variation. Actually, no two motives of the variations share the same rhythmic pattern. As in the case of Friedman, Muczynski matched twelve different basic

rhythmic patterns for twelve variations. Muczynski also made use of changing meters (see example 58) that seem to flow naturally from the music's rhythmic impulses. In this work the basic pulse remains constant, usually felt in eighth or quarter notes.

Example 58. Muczynski, *Variation 6*, measures 1-4, changing meters.



One way that Muczynski propelled his rhythms is to have two notes of equal length followed by shorter note values. The rhythms found in the left-hand part of variation 7 are typical of this (example 59).

Example 59. Muczynski, *Variation 7*, measures 9-12.



This “signature” rhythm can also be found in variations 6, 8, 9, 10, and 11. Another rhythmic trait found in this work is the use of an eighth or sixteenth rest on the downbeat in the melodic line of the right hand, while the left hand plays an accent, or vice versa (example 60).



Example 60. Muczynski, *Variation 1*, measures 17-20.



This rhythmic device is also found in variations 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 12.

The motoric quality of Muczynski's rhythm is often achieved through the use of repeated rhythmic patterns at various pitch levels. Many kinds of repeated rhythmic patterns including ostinati are employed in a number of variations in this set (examples 61 and 62).

Example 61. Muczynski, *Variation 6*, measures 17-20, repeated rhythmic pattern.



Example 62. Muczynski, *Variation 4*, measures 1-4, ostinato rhythm.



An excellent summary of Muczynski's use of rhythm has been included in an article written by David Brin for *Strings*:

Driving, vigorous rhythms are Robert Muczynski's trademark. In his music meters may change frequently, but the rhythms are never contrived. While not easy to perform, there is something so natural about these rhythms that they create their own momentum, carrying the performers along, never leaving them grasping for the beat.<sup>40</sup>

Muczynski also used a shift of accents for a driving and multi-rhythmic effect.

This usually occurs near the final cadence of each variation (example 63).

Example 63. Muczynski, *Variation 1*, measures 29-30.



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<sup>40</sup> David M. Brin, "In Print," *Strings* 5, No. 2 (September-October 1990): 13.

### *Motivic Developments*

Just like in the cases of the previous two composers, many motives or melodies of Muczynski's variations can be analyzed by using those six motivic cells. Table 9 shows how these cells are employed in each variation.

Table 9. Cells and Their Forms Used in Each Variation

Variation	Cell Numbers and Forms Used
1	1 2 (o, r) 4 (oT, r) 5 6 (o, i)
2	1 2 ( r )
3	1 (o, i) 2 3 5
4	1 (o, r) 2
5	1 (o, i) 2 6
6	1 3
7	1 2 5 (o, i)
8	1 ( i ) 2 (o, r) 5 (o, i)
9	1 (o, i) 2 (o, r) 5 ( i )
10	1 (o, i) 2 3 4 ( r ) 5 ( i ) 6
11	1 (o, i) 2 (o, i, r) 4 ( r ) 5 ( i )
12	1 (o, i) 2 (o, r) 4 5 ( i ) 6

Muczynski utilized at least two or more motivic cells for each variation in a variety of ways. Motivic cells 1, and 2, especially, are used in all variations except one for cell 2 (variation 6). Especially, in variation 10, all six motivic cells are employed separately or in combination.

Example 65. Example of each cell used in *Variation 10*.

Cell 1



Cell 2



Cell 3



Cell 4



Cell 5



Cell 6



As in Friedman, Muczynski also constructed new melodies, using only these motivic cells (example 66).

Example 66. Muczynski, *Variation 10*, measures 21-24.



### *Grouping*

Although Muczynski did not specify much detailed grouping in the score, several elements in deciding groups of variations should be considered when playing the whole set of variations. First of all, there are three *attaccas* between variations 2 and 3, 5 and 6, and 11 and 12. These variations are to be played without pauses so as to be included in the same groups. Other factors for deciding grouping are tempo, meter, dynamic range, and rhythm. According to these considerations, the following is possible:

Group 1 - Variations 1, 2, and 3

Group 2 – Variations 4, 5, and 6


Group 3 – Variations 7, 8, and 9

Group 4 – Variations 10, 11, and 12

In the first group, all three variations have similar tempo marks. These three variations can be considered as parts of a larger dimensional form-- a three-part form with a formula of ABA'-- since variation 3 has the same meter (2/4) and similar rhythmic pattern as in variation 1, representing a returning section A'. Variation 2, with its

different meter (5/8) and rhythm, serves as a contrasting B section. Furthermore, the fact that the final cadence of variation 3 becomes the strongest one in this group of variations enhances the plausible idea of this grouping.

Similarly, variations 4, 5, and 6 form a group, as each variation is a part of a larger three-part work (ABA'). In this case, variations 4 and 6 have the same overall meter (6/8) and basic note value (eighth note). Variation 5, with its different meter (3/4) and slower tempo (*andante*), serves as a contrasting B section. Variation 4 (A) and variation 6 (A') have faster tempi *scherzando* and *allegro* as their tempo marks respectively. The dynamic range of variation 5 is softer than those of the outer variations.

The next group, variations 7, 8, and 9, is characterized by the use of unique rhythms: variation 7, by its "signature" rhythm (  ); variation 8, with a tango rhythm; and variation 9, with a waltz rhythm. The fermata sign at the end of variation 9 separates this group from the following one.

The final group consists of variations 10, 11, and 12. Variations 10 and 11 are in the same slower tempi (*andante*) as their beginning tempi, although the first is speeded up eventually. Variation 11 and 12 are connected with another *attacca* sign.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

The theme of Paganini's *Twenty-fourth Caprice in A minor*, Op. 1 for solo violin is undoubtedly an ideal kind of variation theme, considering the number of variation-related works it has inspired. About twenty sets of variations by important composers are based on this "Paganini theme." It has drawn much attention because of its simple, strong, clear, and conclusive harmonic basis and repeated sixteenth-note figures, as well as symmetrical phrase structure, binary form, diatonic melody, and slow harmonic progression. As Abram Chasins wrote to the composer, when Rachmaninoff had completed his *Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini*, "It seemed to me that there was nothing very much left to do with this theme, that the possibilities had been exhausted, but you have conclusively proven the contrary by this late opus."<sup>41</sup> Since then, composers of the twentieth century have continued to exploit this theme as a source of inspiration in their works. Paganini undoubtedly could not have foreseen this almost endless list of treatments of his theme when he composed it. This seemingly inexhaustible resource may even continue to interest future generations.

Although the three variation sets by Busoni, Friedman, and Muczynski are not well known to the public, they unquestionably deserve a place in the concert repertory,

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<sup>41</sup> Sergei Bertensson and Jay Leyda, *Sergei Rachmaninoff: A Lifetime in Music* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1965), 309.

because of their artistic and pedagogical value, as well as innovative technical originality. These works will provide various experiences in such areas of musical styles as structural treatment, harmonic innovation, rhythmic development, and motivic development.

In the structural treatments, both Friedman and Muczynski showed a high degree of flexibility in utilizing various formats of formal structures. While Busoni presented only two kinds of structures, Friedman utilized eight different frames of structure in his variations. Muczynski especially employed twelve different structures for his twelve variations of the set, thus going to the extreme. By doing this he expanded the areas of applying variation technique to the structural frames of succeeding variations.

Concerning harmony, all three composers developed harmonies that exceed the usual harmonic practices of the Romantic period. By the use of nonfunctional and non-essential harmony, they tried to escape the boundary of traditional tonality. Even though Busoni generally followed Liszt's model in treatment harmony, he also presented his own harmonic language especially in the newly written coda such as changing modality, non-functional harmonic progression for voice-leading and linear gesture, and sudden modulation from a remote key. Friedman's harmony is characterized by an excessive use of non-harmonic tones, chromatic harmonic progression, and tendency toward tonal ambiguity which results from the use of non-functional chord succession in chromatically descending keys, added tone chords, and multi-tonality effects. He also engaged linear, voice-leading gesture and modified cadences in his variations. Friedman, unlike Busoni, presented his variations not in a fixed key but in several different keys (am, AM, FM, and f#m). Muczynski, the latest composer of the three, utilized more contemporary harmonic



devices, such as harsh dissonance, bitonality, added-tone chords, parallelism, synthetic scales, quartal and quintal harmonies, and tone clusters. His tendency toward tonal ambiguity is achieved mainly by the use of equidistant chords (quartal, quintal, and tritone), added-tone chords, and bichords. He also showed Jazz flavor by the use of consecutive seventh chords of various kinds and blue scale.

In the case of rhythm, Friedman and Muczynski applied as many rhythmic patterns as the numbers of variations in their respective works. Friedman chose seventeen rhythmic patterns for the motives of his seventeen variations, and Muczynski matched twelve different basic rhythmic patterns for his twelve variations. Among the three composers, Muczynski is the most diverse in applying rhythmic devices in his music such as changing meters, shift of accents, and motoric driving rhythm. While Busoni used the same meter (2/4) throughout the composition, Friedman and Muczynski utilized seven and eight different meters respectively.

Busoni did not change the initial tempo mark in succeeding variations. Friedman, however, assigned seventeen different tempo marks for his seventeen variations. Similarly, each of Muczynski's twelve variations has different tempo marking, except in one instance (variation 3 – *L'istesso tempo*).

In dynamic signs, on the one hand, Busoni stayed in a relatively small range of dynamics (*p-f*), on the other hand, Friedman liked to use a wide range of dynamics (*ppp-fff*) and extreme dynamic contrasts. Muczynski showed careful and detailed dynamic signs.

All three works are well fitted for the analysis using the six motivic cells drawn from the original Paganini theme. There exist numerous examples of utilizing these cells for the construction of the variations. Among them, the simultaneous use of several motivic cells, constructing melodies using only the motivic cells, and the use of all six motivic cells in one variation are noteworthy.

There are many passages and figurations that challenge the performer with technical difficulties. In the case of Friedman, some figurations are extremely awkward to play in a normal way. It is recommended that these kinds of technical difficulties should be solved by the use of facilitating fingerings.

The pedagogical value of these works derives from the fact that they can provide the performer plenty of opportunities to learn and experiment with many aspects of music such as various innovative structures, harmonies, rhythms, motivic cells, and technical originality. In these works, there exist music of great expressiveness, as in many character pieces; demanding passages of virtuosity, as in études; and compositional innovations, as in contemporary works. In short, these three sets of variations by Busoni, Friedman, and Muczynski are valuable additions both to the concert and the pedagogical repertory.

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